Diffusion Dynamics in the Taylor's College American Degree Transfer Program

EDWARD, Grace Anna

Taylor's College American Degree Transfer Program, Malaysia

Abstract: This study was designed to investigate diffusion dynamics influencing student adoption of American education at a private institution of higher education in Malaysia. Private institutions in this country have traditionally used advertising in the mass media as a means to attract fee-paying students. Diffusion theorists have shown that while the mass media creates awareness, interpersonal communication from a near peer who is a satisfied adopter can have a direct impact on the adoption of an innovation. This study sets out to determine if the use of change agents, opinion leaders, and support activities have a direct impact on marketing American education, something which has not been looked at in Malaysia. It must be noted here that an innovation like the American education system is something so radically different from the British-based system that Malaysian students are used to, that many are still hesitant to take the leap. This study employed the convenience sampling technique to document the perceptions of 30 students from an all-boys high school within the Klang Valley, who got to experience American education via a one-day immersion exercise. A questionnaire was administered after 10 months in order to determine the amount of diffusion that had taken place. The results suggests that the majority of students had developed a favourable attitude toward the innovation, enjoyed this way of learning, believed that it assisted their understanding of the American education system, and would share this knowledge with others. It is hoped that this study will show that research knowledge can be used more extensively in practice; offering an adaptable framework for educators who wish to incorporate new methods of diffusing educational innovations to the local population.
Keywords: Diffusion, innovation, immersion, American education, adoption

1. Introduction

As a former public relations practitioner, I found myself deeply interested in the communication strategies undertaken by Taylor's College to increase student enrolment in the American Degree Transfer Program (ADP). Marketing strategies are currently centralised and spearheaded by the corporate office. Focus is on mass communication with Taylor's College advertisements being placed in the mass media (print) and billboards. This is complemented with promotions in the form of road shows, education fairs and visits to high schools, undertaken by the entire Taylor's College Group. Hence, the Taylor's 'brand' is marketed as a whole as opposed to the individual programmes within the college. Taylor's College has a long established reputation in its 'A' Level and South Australian Matriculation programmes and these usually overshadow all the other programmes within the college. While centralisation may be a good corporate strategy, it does not auger well for Taylor's ADP which is a relatively new programme. Furthermore, most Malaysians who have gone through the national education system which is British-based, have not been exposed to American education.

In 2004, enrolment numbers in most private institutions of higher learning sagged, not only due to domestic and international competition, but also due to changes in government policy. The introduction of National Service delayed the enrolment of students in many private institutions as students had to put their plans on hold while waiting to be called up (The Star, 2005). Another unexpected development was the Education Ministry's decision to

increase its intake of Lower Six students last year. The Government's move to impose more stringent guidelines, especially those relating to accreditation of courses and stricter minimum admission requirements, while being laudable, has further compounded the situation. While foreign student intake remains strong, much can be done to entice the local student population, most of whom continue to remain ignorant of the many options available to them.

1.1   Company Background

Recognised as one of Malaysia's leading private colleges since 1969, Taylor's College offers a comprehensive range of pre-university and tertiary programmes to both local and overseas students. Taylor's degree programmes allow students to choose from a wide range of specializations, all of which are linked to some of the most prestigious universities in the world, from the United Kingdom and Australia to Canada and the United States (www.taylor's.edu.my). Programmes are conducted in close cooperation with partner universities to ensure only the highest standards are maintained. Close monitoring is carried out by representatives from these universities to ensure that all academic aspects of the programmes are compatible to that of the parent universities. A breakdown of the programmes offered appears in Table 1.

Taylor's places an emphasis on providing a holistic and hands-on educational experience for its students, producing more than 40,000 graduates to date. As Ooi Chee Kok, deputy president of Taylor's Education Bhd and chief operating officer of Taylor's Business School said: "It is our aim to create students who fit in both locally as well as in the global community when they start working" (Star, 2005). Currently, due to space constraints, the various programmes in Taylor's College are housed in five different locations within the vicinity of the Klang Valley. Plans are in the pipeline to build a state-of-the-art campus which will house all the programmes under one roof. This will streamline operations and make more effective use of existing resources.

Table 1: *A Breakdown of the Programmes offered by Taylor's College*

Institution	Programme	Year Established	Campus
PRE-U STUDIES	South Australian Matriculation (SAM)	1982	TCSJ
	International Canadian Pre-University (CPU)	1983	TCSJ
	Cambridge 'A' Levels (CAL)	1991	TCSJ
	Taylor's Business Foundation (TBF)	1996	TBS
	Foundation in Computing	2005	TCPJ
AMERICAN DEGREE TRANSFER PROGRAM (ADP)	Open credit transfer programme leading to a Bachelor's Degree	1996	ADP
ARCHITECTURE &	Diploma in Architectural Technology	1998	TCPJ

QUANTITY SURVEYING	Diploma in Quantity Surveying	1998	TCPJ
BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE	Bachelor of Biomedical Science	2004	TCSJ
	Bachelor of Science (Biotechnology)	2004	TCSJ
	Bachelor of Science (Food Technology)	2004	TCSJ
	Bachelor of Health Science (Nutrition & Dietetics)	2004	TCSJ
	Bachelor's Degree in Biomedical Science, Biotechnology	2004	ADP
BUSINESS	Taylor's Business Foundation (TBF)	1992	TBS
	Bachelor of Business in Accounting, Finance, Marketing or Information Technology	1992	TBS
	Bachelor of Business in Banking, Economics	1992	TBS
	Bachelor of Business in Electronic Business, International Business, Management, Sport Management, Tourism, Human Resource Management, Advertising Promotions Management, Financial Planning	1992	TBS
BUSINESS	Double Degree Programmes:		
	Bachelor of Business and Bachelor of Computing	1992	TBS
	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Accounting and Finance	1992	TBS
	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Business Administration	1992	TBS
	Bachelor's Degree in Business	1992	ADP
MASS COMMUNICATION	Diploma in Advertising/Journalism/ Public Relations	2000	TCPJ
	Bachelor of Communication (Hons) in Persuasive Communication/Journalism	2000	TCPJ
	Bachelor's Degree in Communication	2002	ADP
COMPPUTING	Foundation in Computing	2005	TCPJ
	Bachelor's Degree in Applied Science (Computer Science)	2004	TCPJ
	Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science	2004	ADP

ENGINEERING	B.Eng (Hons)/M.Eng Chemical Process Engineering	1998	TCSJ
	B.Eng (Hons)/M.Eng Electronic Engineering	1998	TCSJ
	B.Eng (Hons)/M.Eng Electrical Engineering	1998	TCSJ
	B.Eng (Hons)/M.Eng Mechanical Engineering	1998	TCSJ
	Bachelor's Degree in Engineering	1998	ADP
HOSPITALITY & TOURISM	French Diploma in Hotel Management/ Tourism Management (Honours)	1987	TCHT
	French Higher Diploma in Hotel Management/Tourism Management	1987	TCHT
	Bachelor of Hospitality & Tourism Management (Honours)	2000	TCHT
LAW	Bachelor of Law (Honours) LL.B	1992	TCSJ

TCSJ: Taylor's College Subang Jaya   ADP : Taylor's American Degree Transfer Program
TCPJ: Taylor's College Petaling Jaya   TCHT: Taylor's College School of Hospitality & Tourism
                                               TBS : Taylor's Business School

1.2 Higher Educational Climate in Malaysia

The growth of private higher education in Malaysia can be largely attributed to the country's rapid economic growth. In the first twenty-three years of independence (1957-70), the Malaysian economy grew at the rapid rate of 5.8% (Rao 1976, cited in Jomo 1990), and averaged 7.8% between 1971 and 1980 (Fourth Malaysia Plan, cited in Jomo 1990). For the period 1992-97, real GDP oscillated between 7.8% (1992) and 9.5% (1995) (Economic Report 1997-98). Since Independence, the country used export earnings wisely to improve living standards by building infrastructure (roads, railways, telecommunication, hydroelectric projects etc), schools, hospitals, universities, etc. and to pay subsidies to the poorer strata of society, such as small-time farmers, and other low-income families. As incomes of families improved over time, the demand for higher education grew.

Since the public sector alone could not cope with this rising demand, in 1996, the Malaysian Parliament passed the Private Higher Educational Institutions Act to allow the private sector to enter the higher education market in a more regulated way. The Act also empowers the Minister of Education to approve or disapprove the setting up of private colleges and to invite selected companies to set up private universities. Private higher educational institutes that are approved by the Minister of Education are constantly under the scrutiny of the National Accreditation Board (NAB) or Lembaga Akreditasi Negara (LAN), a statutory body responsible for governing the standards of higher education provided by the private sector, and plays a vital role in the establishment of minimum standards and accreditation of courses.

The Government's objective is to enable the nation's education system to achieve world-class status. The largest allocation in the 2005 budget is for the education sector, accounting for almost a quarter of the total operating allocation. Operating expenditure allocation

amounts to RM16.3 billion for the Ministry of Education and RM5.2 billion for the Ministry of Higher Learning (The 2005 Budget Speech). The Malaysian government's plan to make Malaysia a centre of excellence in education in the Southeast Asian region is another factor that has encouraged the business sector to expand their education arms to attract foreign students. While most private colleges initiated their twinning (or "split degree") programmes with foreign universities, a special group of them have now started collaborating with local public universities through the franchise system.

While new private colleges will continue to be formed by enterprising 'edupreneurs', the cost of establishing a college is likely to rise and, with stiffer competition, the profit margin is expected to be squeezed. There may also be a new requirement that private institutions provide a "holistic education," necessitating the setting up of a "proper campus" with complete recreational and cultural facilities. These will add further to the cost of operating private colleges. Thus, only the big players will be able to afford these facilities. The split foreign degrees ('2+1' and '1+2') may be completely replaced by the '3+0' formula as Malaysian private colleges gain more experience in conducting their courses locally. All these will make Malaysia a thriving centre of educational pursuits.

1.3   The American Education System

In the mid-1990s, American universities began accepting credit transfers from American degree transfer programmes in Malaysia causing a mushrooming of such programmes in most of the more established institutions. However, an innovation like the American education system was something so radically different from the teacher centred, exam orientated system that Malaysian students had been used to, a heritage of the British-based system introduced during colonization, that many were, and still are, hesitant to take the leap. Education, like other resources, varies from country to country although most countries have a built-in British-based or American-based education system. While the two systems are not totally compatible yet, both aim for the highest standards of teaching, the latest state-of-the-art facilities, a wide variety of stimulating extra-curricular activities, all aimed at enriching the student's learning experience and exposure. Under the American education system, students go through 12 years of primary and secondary education before entering college for 2 years, and then progressing to university. The British education system however, sees students going through 11 years of primary and secondary education, 2 years of 'A' levels or equivalent, before moving on to vocational college or technical training. 'A' levels is entry requirement to university. Table 2 shows the respective characteristics of these two popular systems.

Table 2: *The Sequence of Study in the American and British Education Systems*

AMERICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM	BRITISH EDUCATION SYSTEM
6 years – primary school	6 years- primary school
3 years – junior high	5 years – secondary school
3 years – senior high	2 years – post secondary school
2 years – community college	'O' Levels, continue with further education at vocational college and technical training.
2 years – university	'A' Levels is entry requirement to university.
4 years – to get a Bachelor's degree at university, if straight entry into it.	3 years – required to graduate at university.

Table courtesy of Mena Jeyaram (1999)

The American education system focuses more on the 'all-roundedness' of the student encouraging a mix of core subjects and electives from different disciplines in the first two years (Table 3). The student only starts to specialize in the third year allowing for a switch of majors if so desired. The British education system is more exams oriented and enjoys a reputation of excellence based on tradition. However, students focus on the area of their discipline very early in the course allowing for little flexibility in switching majors.

Table 3: *The Respective Characteristics*
        of both the American and British Education Systems

AMERICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS	BRITISH EDUCATION SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS
First and second year is general education. Covers a wide range of subjects, including social science, liberal arts, humanities, applied science, business, engineering, etc.	First year is general. In the second year, student specialises in his/her field of study.
Students take their core subjects and a number of electives from different disciplines.	From the second year, students focus on all aspects of their selected discipline.
The American system is flexible and considers variables within a modular system. Every semester is assessed based on assignments, projects and exams.	The British system is exam oriented but has a solid foundation of tradition and achievement, and a reputation of excellence.

Table courtesy of Mena Jeyaram (1999)

1.4   Taylor's American Degree Transfer Program

Up till 1995, students who wanted to study in America did not have many choices locally and so they had to go directly there. In the mid-1990s, American universities warmed up to the idea of accepting credit transfers from American degree transfer programs in Malaysia. Taylor's saw an opportunity to meet market needs amongst students who were more discerning and chose to offer the American Degree Transfer Program in 1996, thus enabling its students to transfer to reputable American universities on a 2+2 arrangement (Lim, 2005). One of the main advantages of Taylor's ADP is that it allows students to start working towards their Bachelor's degree immediately upon completing secondary school ie form five or SPM. Taylor's ADP is a transfer programme that offers two years of a four-year Bachelor's degree programme for students who have completed the SPM/'O' Levels. Students spend an average of two years at Taylor's College, transfer the credits collected and complete the remaining two at universities in the US, Canada, Australia, UK and other countries (Table 4).

Table 4: *The Progression Channels of Taylor's ADP*

ENTRY	SPM 'O' LEVELS GCE	'A' LEVELS CPU SAM (exceptions are given on a case-by-case basis)	SMU KELAS 3 YEAR 12 GRADE 12 UEC
	⇩	⇩	⇩	⇩
Transfer to US	2 yrs at ADP	1 – 1.5 yrs at ADP	2 yrs at ADP
Transfer to Canada	2 yrs at ADP	1 – 1/5 yrs at ADP	1 – 1/5 yrs at ADP
Transfer to Australia	2 yrs at ADP	1 – 1.5 yrs at ADP	1 – 1.5 yrs at ADP
Transfer to UK	2 yrs at ADP	2 yrs at ADP	2 yrs at ADP
ADP OPTIONS	Business, Engineering, Computer Science, Mass Communication,		

| Liberal Arts, Applied Science				
⇩	⇩		⇩	⇩
TRANSFER OPTIONS				
US	CANADA	AUSTRALIA	UK	TAYLOR'S COLLEGE MALAYSIA

Taylor's ADP is popular for many reasons some of which include small classes, intensive student-lecturer interactions, a broad range of courses and subjects, and numerous extra-curricular activities as can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5: *Characteristics of Taylor's ADP*

Taylor's ADP …..	Using the following tools …
Puts the student first	~ Small classes resulting in individual attention ~ Interactive lectures allowing for student feedback ~ Counselling is available for all students ~ International students are closely monitored
Promotes personal growth	~ Field trips are encouraged to broaden knowledge ~ The college helps students to find internships ~ Staff are provided training on an ongoing basis
Promotes leadership skills	~ Students take on responsibility in clubs/societies ~ Classroom projects encourage teambuilding
Celebrates diversity	~ Intercultural activities are encouraged ~ Student population is a mix of both local and international people ~ Religious site tours promote racial harmony
Teaches critical thinking	~ Hands-on projects and real world experiences develop problem solving skills ~ Inculcate the habits of professional practice
Broadens students' minds	~ Provides a rigorous liberal education ~ Cross-disciplinary experiences ~ Extra curricular activities
Facilitates learning	~ Trained lecturers ~ Knowledgeable administrators

1.5   Marketing Strategies

Private colleges spend millions of dollars every year on advertising campaigns designed to increase an awareness of the many options available. Graph 1 shows the advertising expenditure of Taylor's College's immediate competitors for the first half of 2005. Efforts are, however, decentralized with each private institution making individual decisions about whether and when to undertake such campaigns, and trying to outdo each other in terms of strategy, creativity and innovation.

**Advertising Expenditure
January 2005 to June 2005**
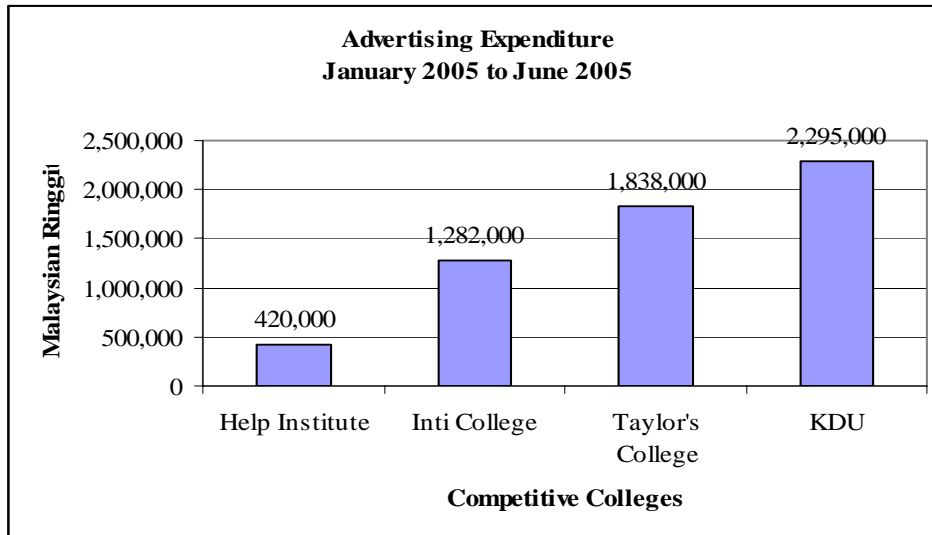
Graph 1: *Advertising Expenditure for Print and Electronic Media
for the first half of 2005 (A C Nielson, 2005)*

Recently, marketing strategies within Taylor's College have been centralised and spearheaded by the corporate office. Individual programmes are given very little autonomy to strategise their own marketing campaigns. This has not augured due to the overall drop in intake numbers mainly due to the rising cost of studying abroad versus the many options available locally. Given that the current generation is IT savvy, the Taylor's College official website serves the best means of getting the message across. Billboards and radio are used to advertise the Taylor's College brand but not the individual programmes that are offered. School visits are spearheaded by the corporate office and again the college goes in under the 'Taylor's' umbrella with all programmes being represented but not individually advertised. Taylor's ADP uses the following channels to promote the programme (Table 6).

Table 6: *The Communication Channels Currently Used by Taylor's ADP (Wong, 2005)*

Newspapers	Advertisements are taken out three times a year to promote each semester
Online Website	This is ongoing throughout the year
Education Fairs	Taylor's ADP participates in three major education fairs annually
Brochures/Fliers	Ongoing and sent to databases of prospective students
School Visits	As and when organised by the corporate office but usually during the first six months of the year

Taylor's ADP relies heavily on the official website and brochures and fliers which are sent to databases of prospective students. School visits are carried out in conjunction with the other programmes under Taylor's College. Newspaper advertisements are taken out three times a year just before the commencement of each semester to announce intake and registration procedures. There are three main or national education fairs that Taylor's ADP participates in. No radio, billboard or television advertising is set aside for the programme. Publicity arising from ad hoc public relations efforts is sporadic and usually unplanned. A look at the advertising budget for Taylor's College shows that the bulk of it is allocated for print advertising (Graph 2).

**Advertising Expenditure: Taylor's College
January 2005 to June 2005**
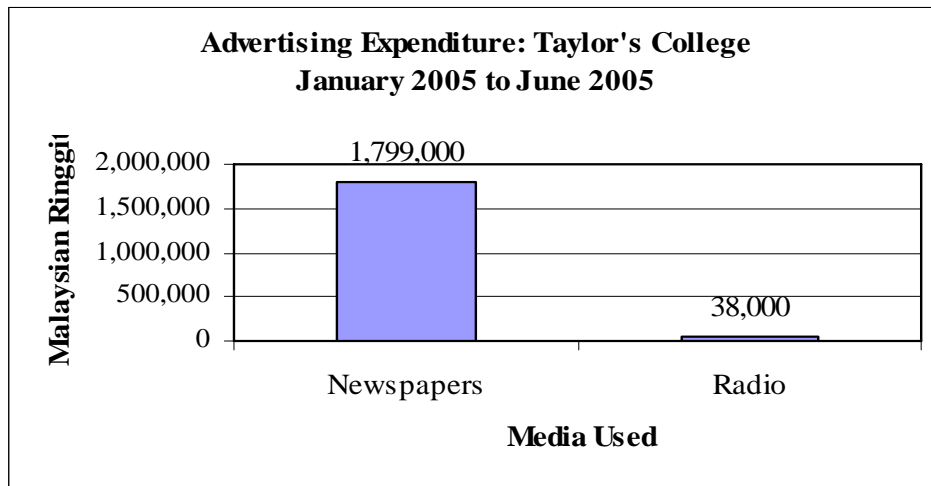
Graph 2: *The Breakdown of Taylor's College Advertising Budget
For the first half of 2005 (A C Nielson, 2005)*

In order to better understand the influence of the current communication methods currently being used by Taylor's ADP, the researcher explored literature related to the diffusion of innovations within educational environments. Everett Rodgers' (1995) diffusion of innovation theory was used to guide research activities and determine if the use of interpersonal communication from a satisfied adopter had a direct impact on the adoption of Taylor's ADP. A brief definition of the terminology used in this paper follows (Table 7).

Table 7: *Definitions of Terminology*

Terms Used	Conceptual Definition	Theorist
Innovation	An idea, practice or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption. It does not matter whether or not an idea is objectively new as measured by the lapse of time since its first use or discovery but rather the perceived newness of the idea for the individual. Hence, if the idea seems new to the individual, it is an innovation.	Everett M Rogers (1995)
Learning	The process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.	David Kolb (1981, 1985)
Experiential Learning	This involves a direct encounter with the phenomena being studied rather than merely thinking about the encounter, or only considering the possibility of doing something about it.	Borzak (1981: 9 quoted in Brookfield 1983)
Interpersonal Communication	A method of communication in which one person (or group) interacts with another person (or group) without the aid of a mechanical device.	Joseph R Dominick (2002)
Mass Communication	The process by which a complex organisation with the aid of one or more machines produces and transmits public	Joseph R Dominick (2002)

	messages that are directed at large, heterogeneous, and scattered audiences.	
Opinion Leadership	The degree to which an individual is able to influence other individuals' attitudes or overt behaviour informally I a desired way with relative frequency.	Everett M Rogers (1995)
Persuasion	Equivalent to attitude formation and change on the part of an individual but not necessarily in the direction intended by some particular source, such as a change agent.	Everett M Rogers (1995)

1.6   The Innovation-Decision Process

Rogers (1995) distinguished two types of learning: cognitive (meaningless) and experiential (significant) with the former referring to academic knowledge and the latter to applied knowledge. The key distinction here is that experiential learning addresses the needs and wants of the learner, which Rogers equates to personal change and growth. According to Rogers, learning is facilitated when:

a)   The student participates completely in the learning process and has control over its nature and direction

b)   It is primarily based upon direct confrontation with practical, social, personal or research problems

c)   Self-evaluation is the principal method of assessing progress or success.

Rogers (1995) goes a step further to list at least five factors affecting the adoption process. They are:

a)   **Relative advantage.** The degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it replaces.

b)   **Compatibility.**   The degree to which an innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, experiences, and needs of potential adopters.

c)   **Complexity.** The degree to which an innovation is perceived as difficult to understand and use.

d)   **Trialability.** The degree to which an innovation may be experienced on a limited basis.

a)   **Observability.** The degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others.

The innovation-decision model (Figure 1) shows the somewhat lengthy and complex procedure of getting people to act on a message, and the intervening influences. The five stages are summarized as follows:

b)   **Knowledge** occurs when an individual is exposed to an innovation's existence (such as an idea or a new product), often by means of an advertisement or a news story. The mental activity at the knowledge stage is mainly cognitive (or knowing).

c)   **Persuasion** occurs when the individual forms a favourable or unfavourable attitude toward the innovation. The main type of thinking at the persuasion function is affective (or feeling). Until the individual knows about a new idea, he or she cannot begin to form an attitude toward it. The main outcome at this stage is either a favourable or unfavourable attitude toward the innovation.

    d)   **Decision** occurs when the individual engages in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject the innovation**.**

    e)   **Implementation** occurs when an individual puts an innovation into use.

    f)   **Confirmation** occurs when an individual seeks reinforcement of an innovation-decision already made, or reverses a previous decision to adopt or reject the innovation if exposed to conflicting messages about the innovation.

It is important to realize that a person may choose to terminate the process after any step. Although many are made aware of an idea or a product, only a few will ultimately adopt it. Knowing about an innovation does not mean that one will adopt it. The individual must form a favourable or unfavourable attitude toward the innovation. Mass media messages are too general to provide the specific kind of reinforcement the individual needs ie whether his or her thinking is on the right track in comparison with the opinion of peers. Interpersonal communication from a near-peer who is a satisfied adopter often pushes a potential adopter over the edge of decision into adoption of an innovation (Rogers, 1995).
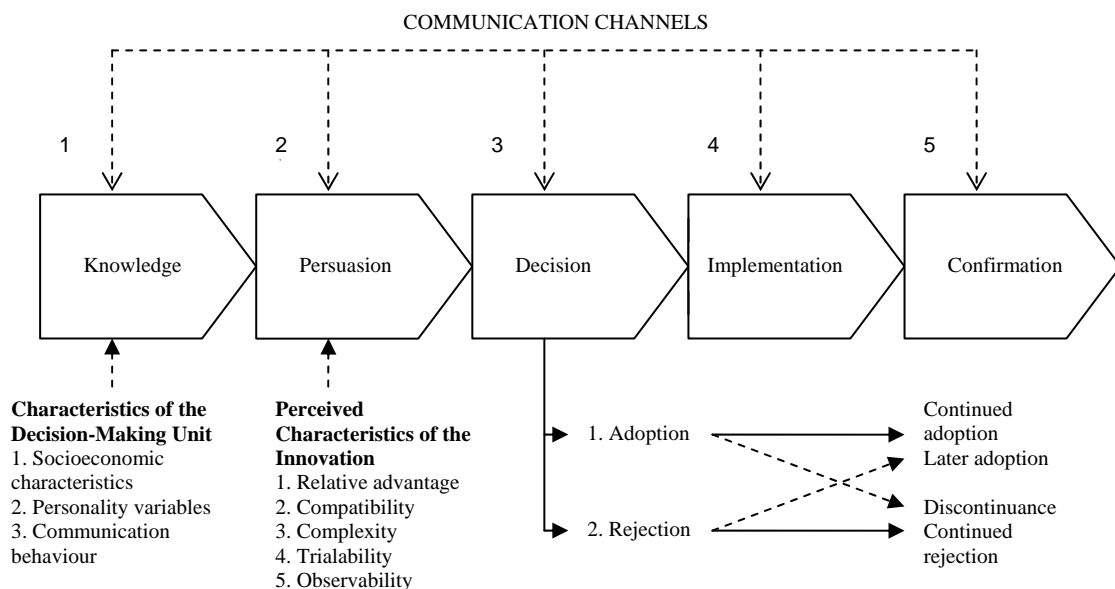

Figure 1: *Model of Stages in the Innovation-Decision Process (Rogers, 1995)*

The traditional diffusion of innovations literature deals mostly with an invention, practice, or program model that has proven effective (Rogers, 1995). The concern is with why the innovation does or does not become widely adopted. This process may be influenced by the involvement of a change agent, someone who is charged with introducing it to others to whom it may be useful (Rogers, 1995; Fullan 2001a).

Kolb and Fry (1975) suggest that the learning process often begins with a person carrying out a particular action or having concrete experience, and then seeing the effect of the action in this situation. The Hierarchy of Communication Effects states that an individual usually must pass from knowledge change to overt behaviour change in a cumulative sequence of stages that are generally parallel to the stages in the innovation-decision process (Rogers, 2005). Furthermore, it goes on to add that interpersonal communication channels are

generally more effective in causing the persuasion effects, and mass media channels are more effective in creating knowledge or building awareness. The Communication Theory of Social Exchange (Thibault & Kelley, 1952) is based on the exchange of rewards and costs to quantify the values of outcomes from different situations for an individual. People strive to minimise costs and maximise rewards and base the likeliness of developing a relationship with someone on the perceived possible outcomes. When these outcomes are perceived to be greater, there is more disclosure and a closer relationship develops with that person. Small group communication occurring among three or more people usually seeks to achieve commonly recognised goals. The functional perspective theory claims that there are four functions for effective decision making which include an analysis of the problem, goal setting, identification of alternatives, and an evaluation of positive and negative characteristics, all of which are equally important (Hirokawa R & Gouran D, 1983) and useful in guiding groups through different types of communication. The social network theory has also been used by some researchers (Gant & Gant, 2000) to analyse the ways that innovations diffuse through interpersonal linkages in an environment.

Studies in this area look at opinion leadership, peer relationships, the types of connections among members of social networks, and the extent to which those in different social positions exercise influence over adoption of innovations (Barnett, 2003). These theories can be applied to experiential learning approaches, which are usually conducted in small group situations, and explains why it is likely to foster students' learning on a higher-order level, such as their critical thinking ability and the propensity for self-direction in learning (Kreber C, 2001).

1.7   The Objective of this Study

A number of researchers have looked at the reasons why reforms or innovations are adopted differentially in a range of educational environments. Much of the research done in this area focus on inclusive learning environments in higher education (Barnett E, 2003). However, very little has been done to examine its impact on student enrolment where American education is the exception, and not the norm, especially in Malaysia. Factors that appear to be most critical include characteristics of the innovation itself and the process by which it is disseminated. A further goal will be to better understand how diffusion can be directed to be most effective. Using a theoretical framework drawn primarily from Rogers (1995), this study will examine whether interpersonal communication from a near peer who is a satisfied adopter has a direct impact on the adoption of American education when compared to current communication channels that are in use. Rogers' diffusion of innovations model will be applied to an immersion exercise in Taylor's ADP in order to see if mass media alone is sufficient to develop an understanding of American education.

1.8   Research Questions

This study sets out to investigate the following:
a) How effective are the communication channels currently being used by Taylor's ADP?
b) What are students preferred choices of getting information?
c) Does experiential learning have a greater influence in disseminating knowledge?
d) Does dissemination of information take place to a greater degree when opinion leaders and peer influence is used?
e) Are learning activities like exposure and experience important for an innovation like Taylor's ADP?

1.9   Limitations of Study

The immersion exercise did not receive immediate approval from the management of Taylor's ADP whose major reservation was that high school students might find it hard to assimilate into classes that were at a more advanced level than what they were used to. At the same time, there was also a concern that classes at Taylor's ADP would be disrupted by the inclusion of too many visiting students. Targeting and approaching selected high schools within the Klang Valley also took some time. Most schools had some reservations as the experiential learning workshop was planned during a weekday causing visiting students to miss their own lessons. As such, approval had to be obtained from the Ministry of Education before such a visit could take place. School counsellors were also concerned that visiting students might take the visit as an opportunity to wander off on their own. By the time approval was obtained, trial exams for the form five students (the desired target audience) were taking place. ACS Klang, an all-boys school within the Klang Valley, was the first to respond and the pilot immersion exercise was carried out on 2 September 2004.

2. Methodology

Data was drawn from four sources: students, the school counsellor, workshop leaders, the registrar of Taylor's College, the marketing manager and the assistant program director of Taylor's ADP; through the use of two methods: questionnaires and interviews.

2.1   Preliminary Data Collection

The researcher interviewed Lim Tou Boon, the registrar of Taylor's College, to establish the history of Taylor's College in Malaysia. Lim was instrumental in providing an insight into Taylor's decision to offer an American Degree Programme. In order to explore in some depth the current marketing communication strategies undertaken by Taylor's ADP, interviews were conducted with the assistant programme director and the marketing manager. These facts formed a baseline against which the success or failure of the immersion exercise could be benchmarked (Table 8).

Table 8: *Key Personnel Interviewed*

Person Interviewed	Objective
Lim Tou Boon Registrar Taylor's College Sdn Bhd	To obtain a history of Taylor's growth in Malaysia and the reasons behind the move to offer an American Degree Programme
Geraldine Chong Assistant Programme Director Taylor's ADP	To clarify the key communication objectives that need to be projected in any marketing strategy conducted for Taylor's ADP
Christine Wong Marketing Manager Taylor's ADP	To corroborate Taylor's ADP's communication channels and the proportions in which they are used and to identify key competitors

Three key communication objectives, as highlighted by the assistant programme director, which need to be disseminated in any campaign designed to market Taylor's ADP are:

a)   Broad based education which allows students to study core subjects as well as other electives

b)   Flexibility in switching majors and class scheduling

c)   Open credit transfer programme not only to any American university but also to other countries like Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom

2.2   The Immersion Exercise

Thirty form four students from ACS Klang, an all-boys high school within the Klang Valley, were invited to participate in an immersion exercise at Taylor's ADP. The initial idea was to invite form five students as this would be a more likely target group. However, the first school to respond was ACS Klang and they could only send their form four students as the SPM exam was around the corner. Given their enthusiasm and prompt response, it was decided to use this school as a prototype for the immersion exercise. The programme for the day (Table 9) follows:

Table 9: *Programme for the Immersion Exercise*

Time	Flow of events
8.30am	Arrival of ACS Klang students
8.45am	Welcome speech by the programme director of Taylor's ADP
9.00am	Breakfast on the go and pairing up with a 'buddy' ie a senior student from Taylor's ADP
9.10am	High school students and buddies attend a variety of classes from both the science and arts disciplines
12.30pm	Students and buddies adjourn to college hall for lunch and a mix and meet session
2.00pm	Senior students give short talks on the various disciplines and clubs/societies that are available in Taylor's ADP
2.30pm	Interactive games to build rapport and lighten the atmosphere
3.00pm	Visiting students are broken up into small informal groups and interact with senior students for a question and answer session
3.45pm	Students fill up a feedback form to provide input for future workshops
4.00pm	Students depart the college

A student counsellor accompanied the students to act as chaperon according to government regulations. The students were requested to wear their school uniforms for easy identification and were not charged anything to participate in the event. Breakfast and lunch were provided and transport was arranged to bring them from and send them back to ACS Klang.

2.3   The Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop Model

Drawing from Everett's (1995) diffusion of innovation model, the researcher came up with a prototype for the immersion exercise which was called the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop (Figure 2). This model shows how experiential learning is vital to start off two stages of diffusion: the first in creating social networks which then leads to opinion leadership and peer influence; and the second in creating concrete experience which leads to knowledge while allowing the participant to observe and reflect on what has been experienced. It is common for individuals to share new experiences with others leading to further dissemination of the idea. Then, the individual has to decide whether or not to adopt the innovation.
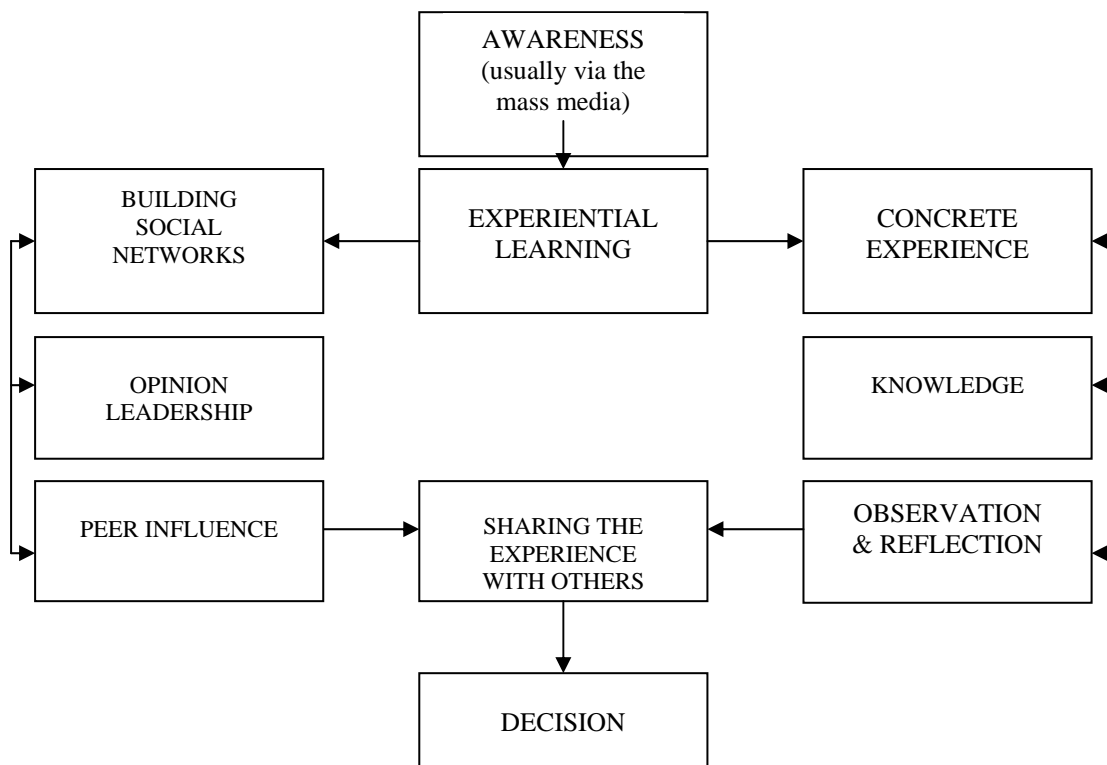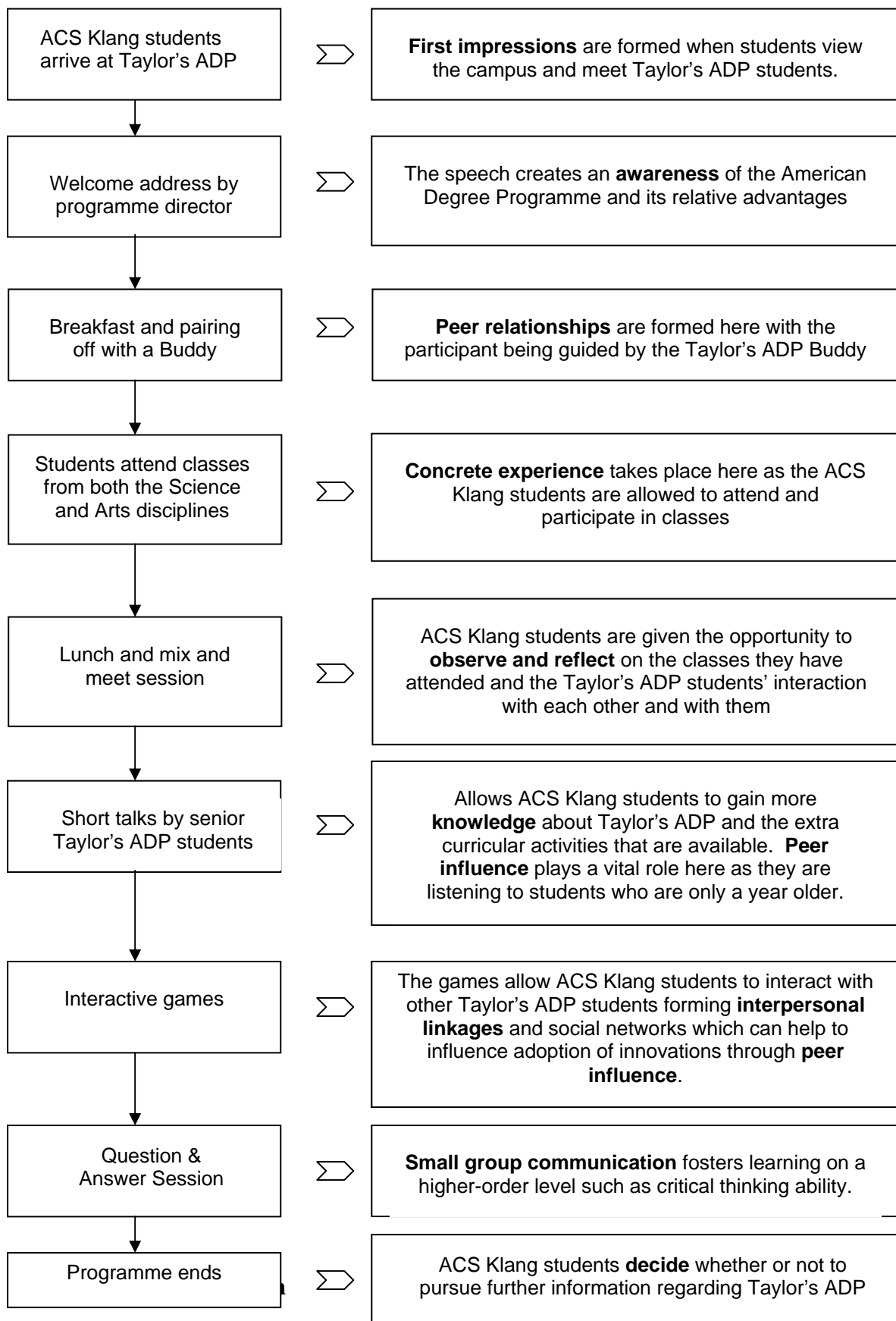
Figure 2: *The various stages a participant of the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop will go through in the adoption of an innovation*

An application of the model in the various stages of the programme drawn up for the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop is shown in Figure 3.2. The model stops at the decision making process as in this case, it is not possible as of yet to determine the final outcome.

The Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop progressed smoothly with some minor hitches. After the talks given by senior Taylor's ADP students, the floor was opened up for questions but none of the ACS Klang students felt comfortable enough to do so. Also, some students were not happy with the classes that they had been assigned to although every student had an opportunity to attend one liberal arts class and one science class.

Figure 3: *The Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop Model in Action*

ACS Klang students arrive at Taylor's ADP	⟹	**First impressions** are formed when students view the campus and meet Taylor's ADP students.
Welcome address by programme director	⟹	The speech creates an **awareness** of the American Degree Programme and its relative advantages
Breakfast and pairing off with a Buddy	⟹	**Peer relationships** are formed here with the participant being guided by the Taylor's ADP Buddy
Students attend classes from both the Science and Arts disciplines	⟹	**Concrete experience** takes place here as the ACS Klang students are allowed to attend and participate in classes
Lunch and mix and meet session	⟹	ACS Klang students are given the opportunity to **observe and reflect** on the classes they have attended and the Taylor's ADP students' interaction with each other and with them
Short talks by senior Taylor's ADP students	⟹	Allows ACS Klang students to gain more **knowledge** about Taylor's ADP and the extra curricular activities that are available. **Peer influence** plays a vital role here as they are listening to students who are only a year older.
Interactive games	⟹	The games allow ACS Klang students to interact with other Taylor's ADP students forming **interpersonal linkages** and social networks which can help to influence adoption of innovations through **peer influence**.
Question & Answer Session	⟹	**Small group communication** fosters learning on a higher-order level such as critical thinking ability.
Programme ends	⟹	ACS Klang students **decide** whether or not to pursue further information regarding Taylor's ADP

3.4   Research Approach

In order to answer the research questions, the researcher collected data from various sources comprising newly collected data (primary data) and pre-existing material (secondary data).

Participant observation was used to gain an inside perspective of the experiential learning workshop participant's culture. This involved interacting with students when they first entered Taylor's ADP premises, observing them in classroom situations, and during the interactive sessions held after classes. This allowed the researcher to gain awareness through personal experience by getting to know the people involved. Field notes taken during and immediately after the event then became raw data that could be organized and analysed. Participant observation is one of the most common approaches for collecting data and has the ability to reveal otherwise unavailable data. However, it is important to maintain a certain level of objectivity to record and analyse the observations without prejudice.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from selected participants of the experiential learning workshop, the school counsellor and workshop leaders. A set of open-ended questions enabled the researcher to elicit in-depth responses from the respondents who were allowed to answer freely. Probing or follow-up questions to explore an issue in greater depth were used to clarify responses and crystallize opinions.

A questionnaire was used to obtain primary data for this study as it is a commonly used method and can provide a wealth of descriptive data. It is also a rather inexpensive way to gather data and can cover a large sample in a short space of time.

Given the time frame allocated for this study, it is not possible to determine if the high school students will eventually adopt Taylor's ADP as this would only be decided after they complete their form five exams. As such, the questionnaire focused on how effectively Taylor's ADP communication strategies were performing in terms of the amount of knowledge retained or understood by the ACS Klang students who participated in the experiential learning workshop, brand and information recall, comprehension of messages therein, and whether they had the required knowledge or skill for effective adoption of the innovation. Of key interest was where exactly such knowledge had been obtained as it was important to compare effectiveness of the various communication channels used.

2.4   The Sampling Group

The researcher had no control over the sampling group as the selection of participants was handled by the school counsellor. Thus, this study employed the convenience sampling technique to document the perceptions of 30 students from an all-boys high school within the Klang Valley, who got to experience American education via a one-day immersion exercise. Pre-tests and post-tests questionnaires were administered in order to determine the amount of diffusion that had taken place. The perceptions of these participants were gauged via a questionnaire and these responses were then benchmarked against thirty of their peers who had not attended the workshop. Again, the students that comprised the control group were selected at random by the school counsellor.

3. Discussion and Analysis of Findings

Feedback forms given to participants of the Taylor's ADP experiential learning workshop immediately after the event showed a positive response with only two participants expressing negative sentiments. Since the workshop was held in September 2004, it will be interesting

to see whether perceptions have changed given the interval of ten months when the follow-up was conducted.

3.1   Ethnic Breakdown

Both the participants of the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop (ELW) and the students in the control group had an ethnic mix that represented the various racial groups found in this country. In both the sampling group and the control group, Bumiputras formed the minority (Graph 3).   More Indians (60%) attended the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop compared to Chinese (20%). However, the control group was dominated by Chinese students (70%). ACS Klang opened the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop to all form four students on a first come first serve basis. The control group however were students selected at random by their school counsellor.
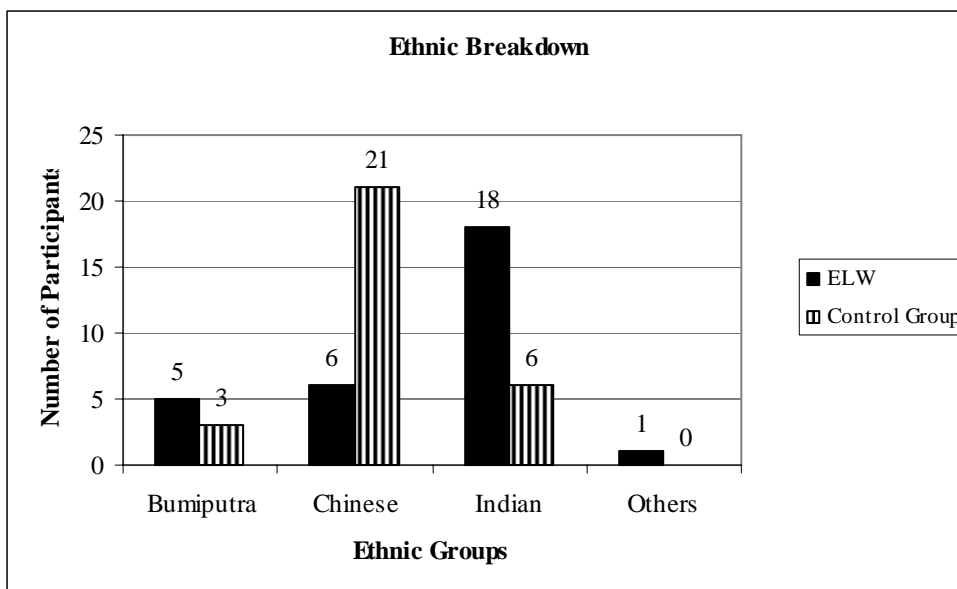
Graph 3: *Racial Composition of Respondents*

3.2   Preferred Language

Although Bahasa Malaysia is the medium of instruction in all national type schools, there is a move to use more English and currently, following a government directive, both Science and Mathematics are thought in English. This however, does not ensure the proficiency of the students in the English language. Given that Taylor's ADP uses English as the main medium of instruction, it was necessary to gauge the proficiency of the students who participated in the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop (Graph 4). Furthermore, English is a prerequisite for many subjects in Taylor's ADP meaning that students who do not pass this subject will not be allowed to move on.

Language Proficiency: Spoken
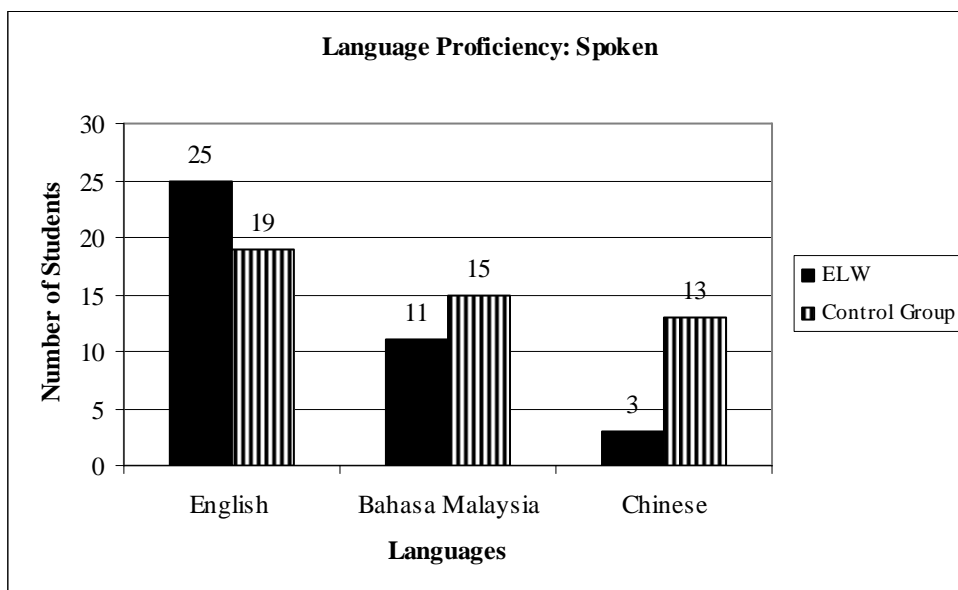
Graph 4: *Spoken Languages the Respondents Preferred*

Students who attended the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop were more conversant in English (83%) than their peers (63%) who were in the control group. This meant that the participants would not have had any trouble following the proceedings of the day. English (83%) also appeared to be the language of choice when it came to writing among the candidates who attended the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop (Graph 5). Sixty-six percent (66%) of the students in the control group were equally comfortable with either English or Bahasa Malaysia.

Language Proficiency: Written
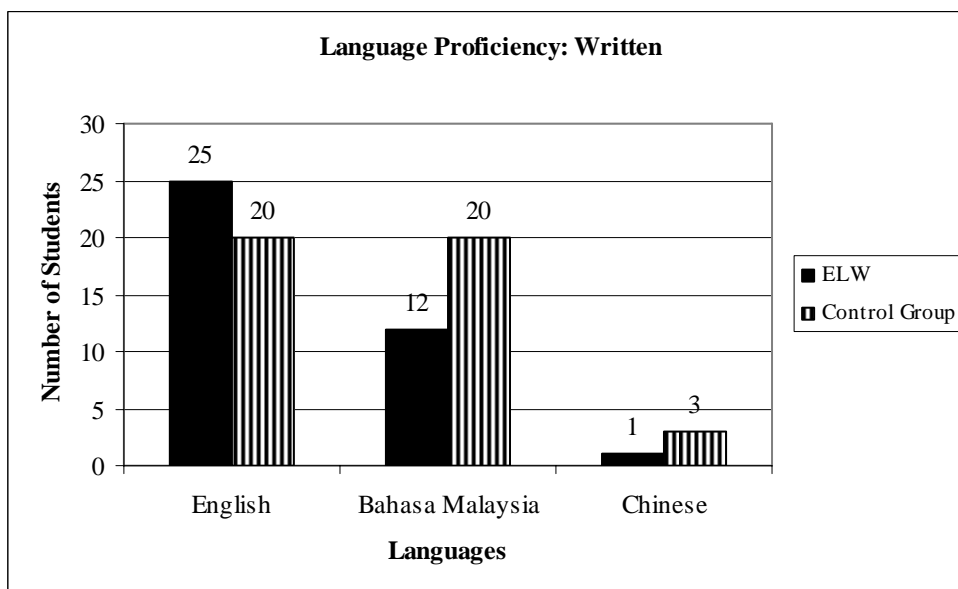
Graph 5: *Written Language the Respondents Preferred*

The racial breakdown of the various groups may have had something to do with this as most Indians in the urban areas come from English speaking backgrounds while many Chinese students are sent to Chinese national schools. This could prove to be a problem for Taylor's ADP where English is the medium of instruction. The fact that English is not the

preferred medium of instruction among the Chinese students could affect future enrolment figures.

3.3   Have You Heard of the American Degree Transfer Programme?

The questionnaire started off with simple questions designed to gauge the knowledge levels of students pertaining to American Degree Transfer Programmes in general. Participants of the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop were more aware (93%) of the existence of American Degree Transfer Programmes than their counterparts in the control group (36%%). Only two candidates (6%) who attended the workshop claimed ignorance of the American Degree Transfer Programmes (Graph 6). The researcher was unable to interview these two candidates to determine the reason for this anomaly as attending the workshop should have given them this knowledge.

Basic Knowledge of American Degree Transfer Programmes
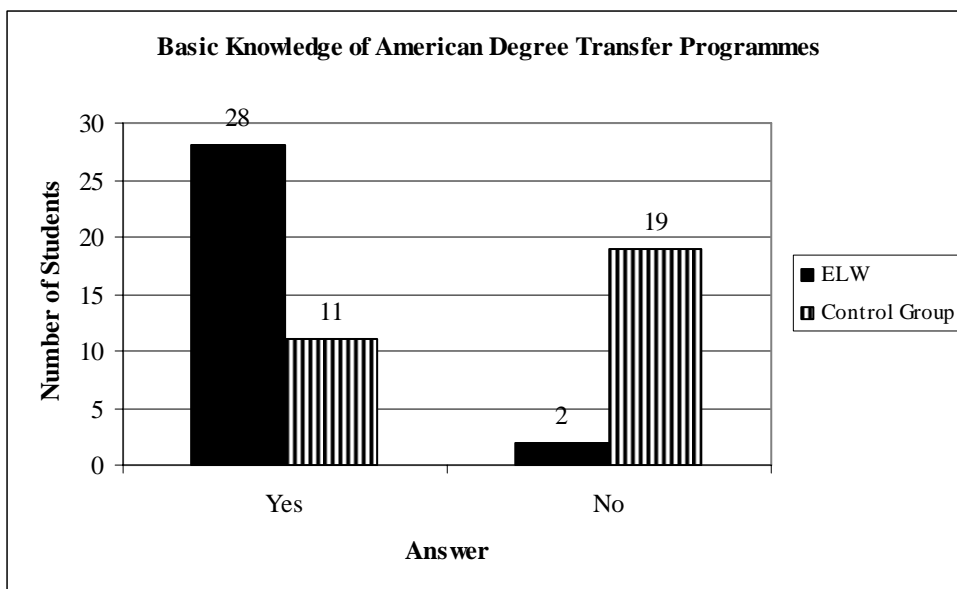
Graph 6: *Respondents' Awareness of American Degree Transfer Programmes*

3.4   Where Do You Usually Get Your Educational Information From?

This question was designed to access the effectiveness of communication channels that are currently being used by private institutions of higher learning. Graph 7 shows that students who participated in the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop turn to the newspapers first (83%) for educational information, followed by school visits (76%). Education Fairs and friends came in third at 63%.
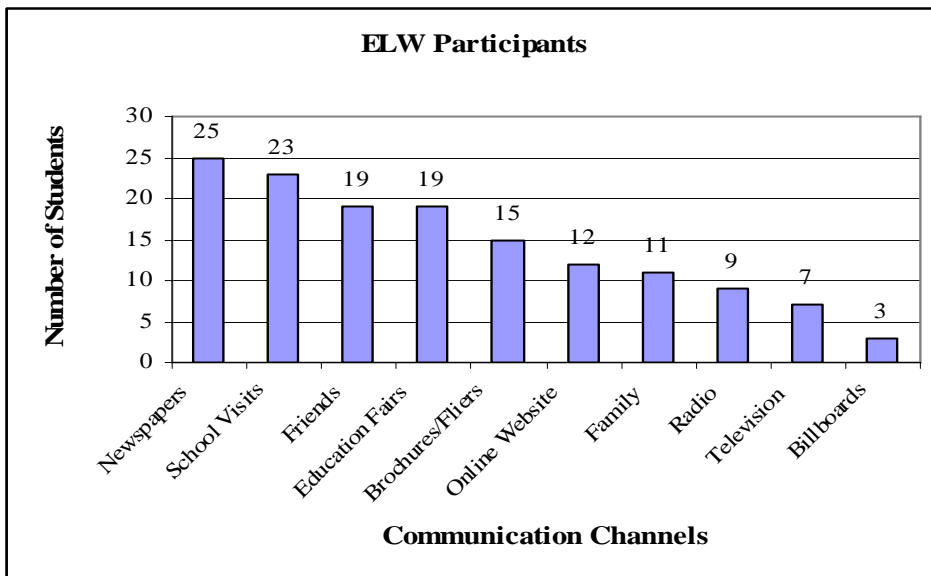
ELW Participants

Graph 7: *Communication Channels ELW Participants obtained their Educational Information from*

The students in the control group however rated friends as their first source of information (73%) closely followed by newspapers (66%). The online website and family came in third at 50% (Graph 8)
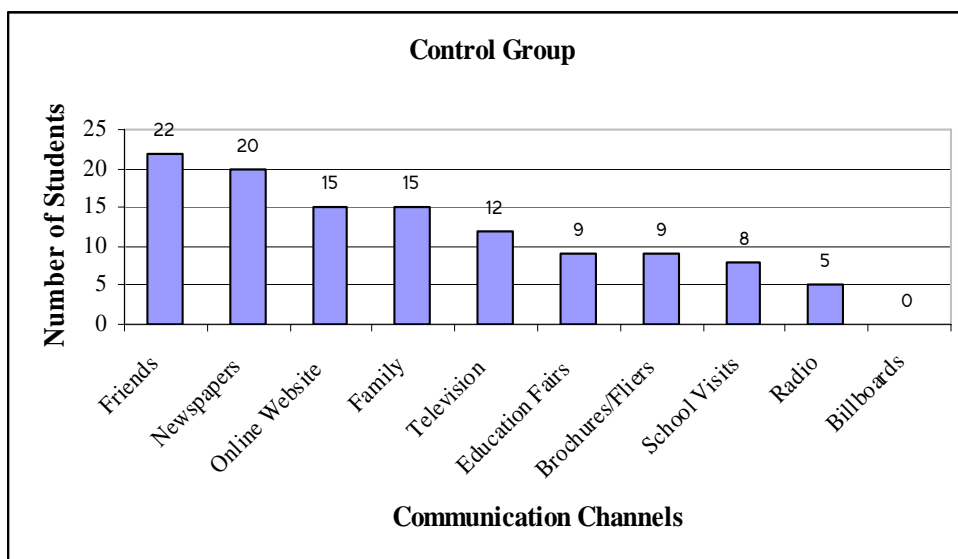
Control Group

Graph 8: The *Control Group Prioritise Different Channels of Communication*

There are two schools of thought here ie one group prefers the print media (newspapers) while the other prefers to get their information from friends. This is interesting especially since the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop seeks to create dissemination of information through peer influence and social networks.

Taking a combination of both groups (Graph 9), students of ACS Klang would turn to newspapers first (75%) followed by friends (68%) to get educational information.

Interestingly, the website was not the first source of information that students in ACS Klang would turn to for educational information (45%).
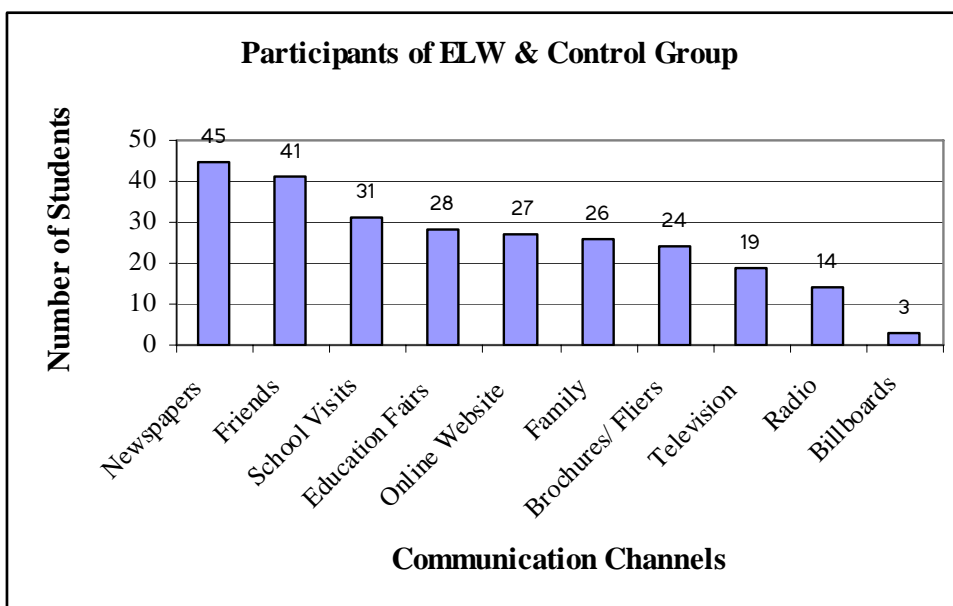
Graph 9: *Media Choices students of ACS Klang would make*

## 3.5   Are You Aware that Taylor's College has an American Degree Transfer Programme?

All those who attended the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop responded with a resounding "Yes" (Graph 10). Students from the control group however, were not aware of the programme despite the advertising campaigns that are ongoing. Considering the amount of money spent on placing advertisements in the print and electronic media (Graph 2), and the amount of time devoted to school visits and educational fairs, this lack of awareness (43%) is disturbing.
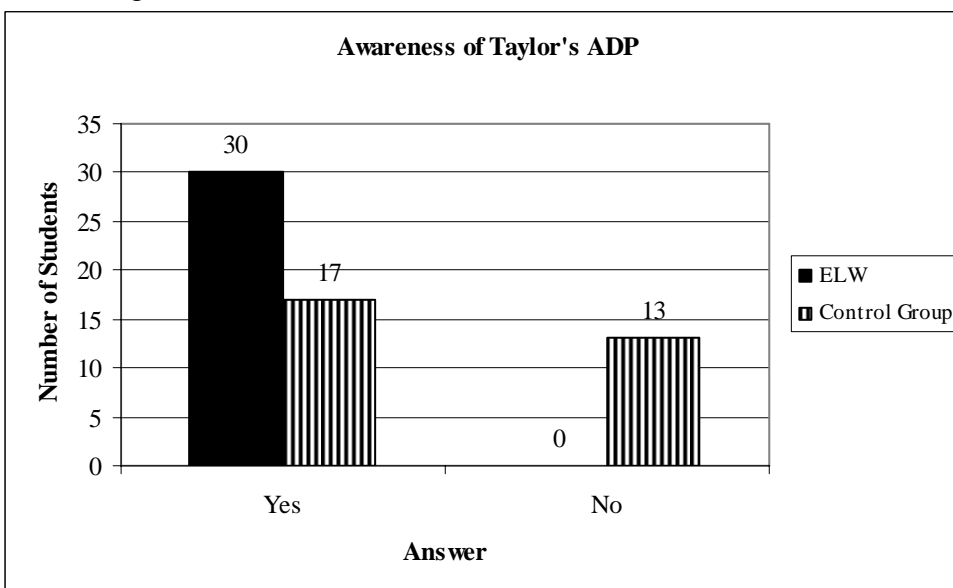
Graph 10: *Participants of the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop were aware of the programme's existence*

3.6   Where Do You Get Your Information about Taylor's College American Degree Transfer Program From?

This question was to determine exactly where students obtained information specific to Taylor's ADP (Graph 11).
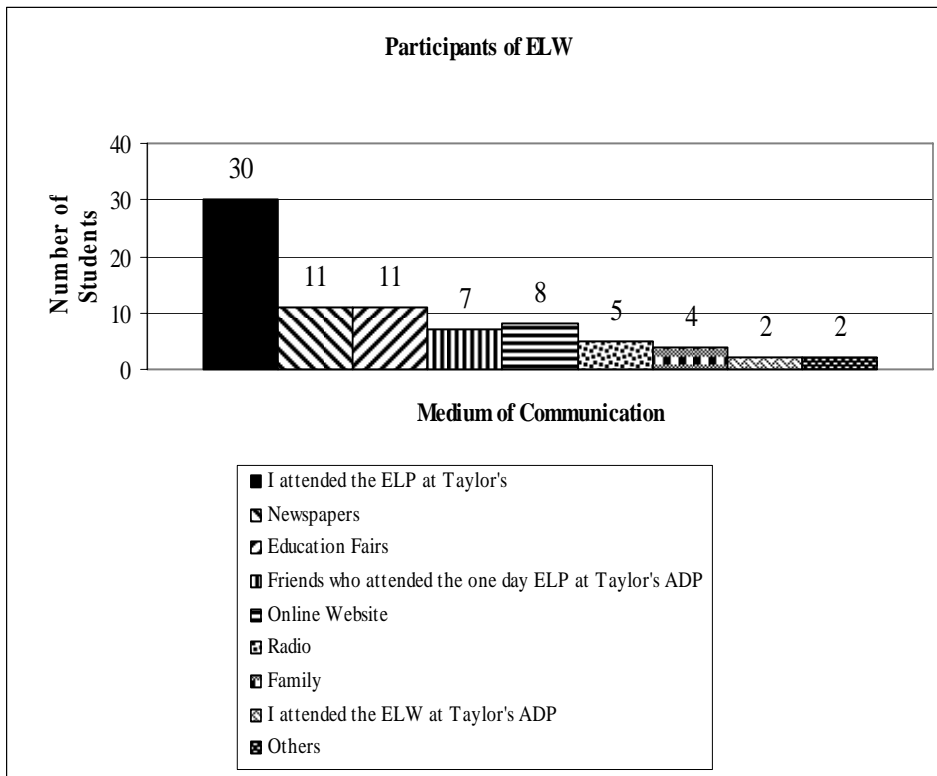
Graph 11: *The Media Sources Participants of the ELW would turn to in their Search for Information*

Students who attended the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop indicated unanimously that this was where they had obtained their information. Students in the control group however, obtained information about Taylor's ADP equally from the newspapers (23%) and from friends who had attended the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop (23%). These two categories were the highest rated sources of information (Graph 12).
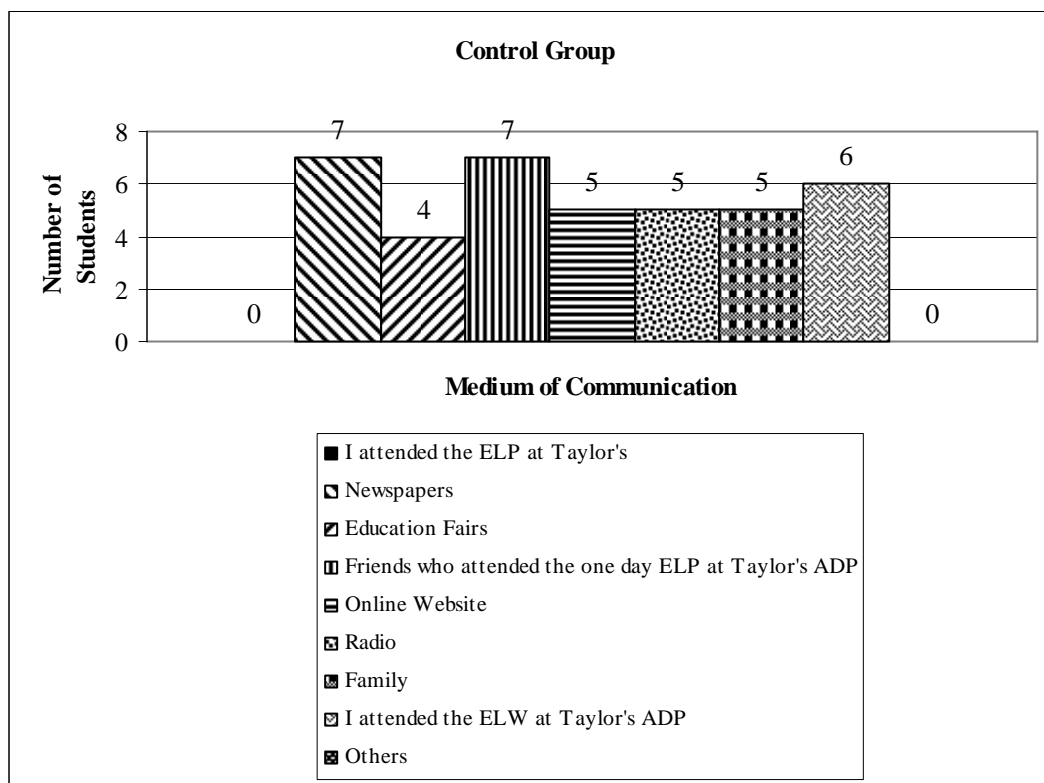
Graph 12: *Students in the Control Group would turn to the Newspapers and Friends who had attended the ELW for further Information*

This is a clear indication that diffusion of innovation has taken place and continues to do so despite a lapse of more than 10 months since the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop was conducted. Peer influence can be a strong determining factor when decisions need to be made, more so when such decisions concern the students' future.
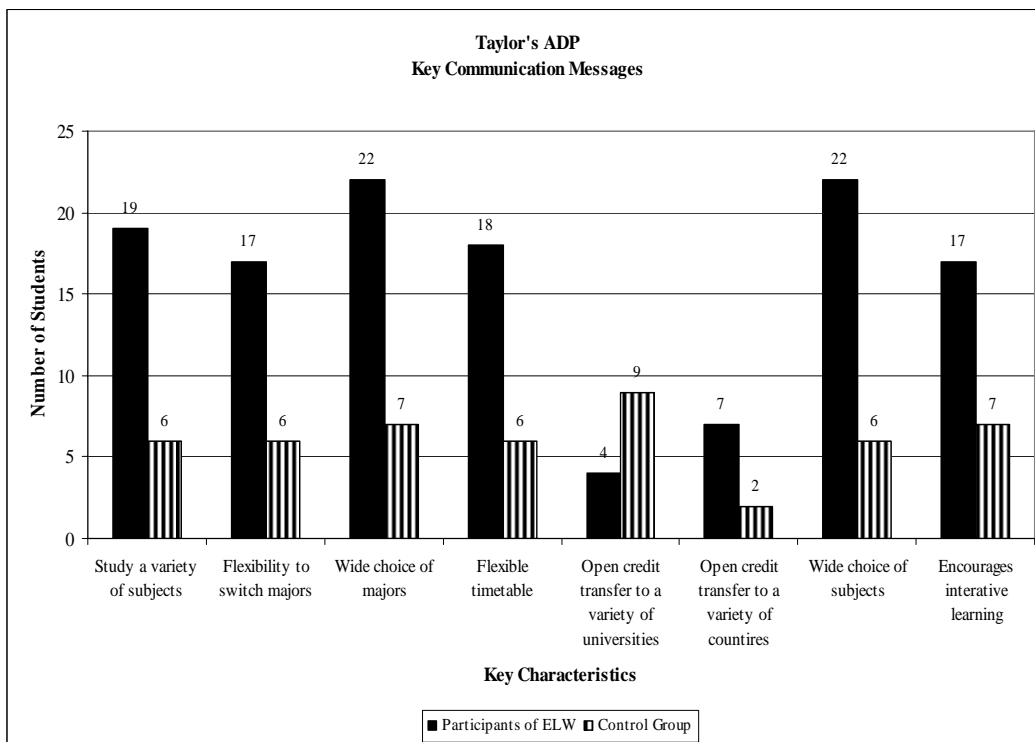
3.7   Did You Know that Taylor's College American Degree Program …?
This question was designed to test the absorption and retention of key communication messages that had been imparted during the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop. In all categories save one, participants of the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop clearly showed a deeper understanding and retention of the key characteristics of the programme (Graph 13).

An anomaly arose in the response to credit transfers to a variety of universities. The researcher was unable to determine the reason for this. However, a look at the graph above shows that open credit transfers to a variety of universities and open credit transfers to a variety of countries scored the lowest among participants of the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop: 13% and 23% respectively. The researcher can only assume that students still link the American Degree Programme to 'study in America' and are so accustomed to this idea, they failed to realize that many more transfer options are available.

In this category, diffusion of information has not been quite as successful and has not even reached the awareness stage. A comparison of both groups of respondents shows that the current communication strategies being used may not be as effective as originally thought

as less than half the respondents in the control group were able to identify the characteristics of Taylor's ADP.


Graph 13: *The Retention Capacity of the Respondents*

3.8   If You Needed More Information about Taylor's College American Degree Transfer Program, Where Would You Obtain It From?

This question was designed to see if peer influence would be instrumental in guiding students in their hunt for educational information (Graph 14). Such groups would also provide a buffer against the difficulties of the initial period of transition to college life.

Surprisingly, students who attended the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop would now turn to the official website for further information (70%). Interestingly enough, these same students would also contact friends at Taylor's ADP (43%) and other friends who had attended the workshop (26%) for additional information. Twenty-three percent (23%) of students from the control group would seek out friends who had attended the workshop to gain more information about Taylor's ADP. This is a clear indication that dissemination of information has and continues to occur through the influence of opinion leaders and peer influence.
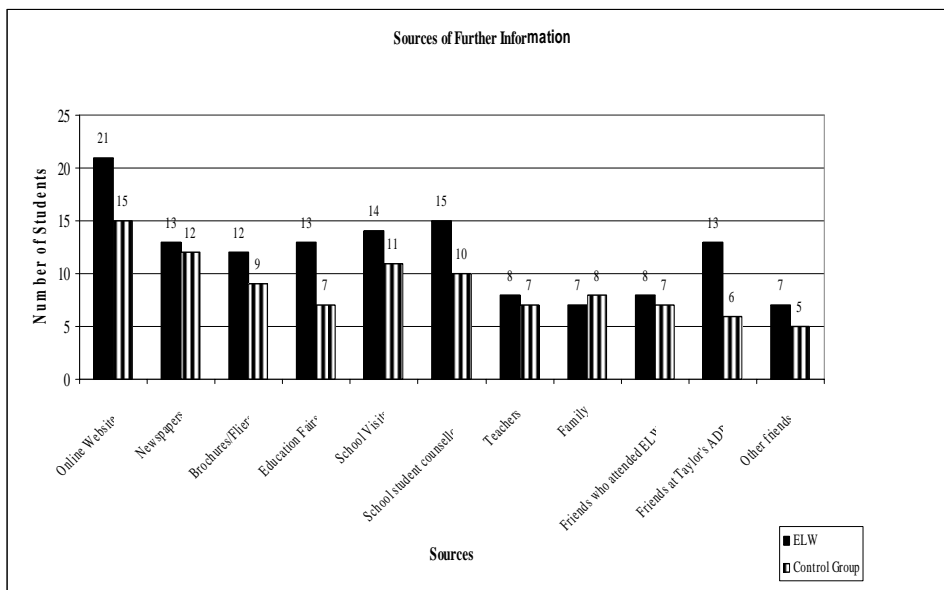
Graph 14: *Respondents' Changing Preferences in their Choice of Media*

3.9   Interviews

Face-to-face interviews with three participants of the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop gave rise to the following findings. The three candidates were chosen from the three major ethnic groups ie one Bumiputra, one Chinese and one Indian. The researcher was not privy to the selection process as students were selected by their school counsellor. The interview was conducted in one session with all three participants in the hope that they would be less intimidated.

All three participants were given the opportunity to talk about the factors that contributed to the success of the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop. The most interesting point that was repeatedly mentioned was the teaching style which was interactive, unlike the method found in national type high schools in Malaysia which is basically a one-way flow. The participants were impressed with the fact that feedback from the students was encouraged. They all felt that the teachers were more open and that communication was better. The visit was a 'first of its kind' for ACS Klang as no college had invited them to actually participate in classes before this. They felt that the experience was invaluable as it allowed them to actually experience college life right down to the classroom atmosphere. The event was actually a 'hot topic' in school for weeks following the visit. The participants had spoken to other friends who did not participate in the visit encouraging them to take part should another opportunity arise. All candidates discussed the visit with their families and showed them the brochures that they had been given. Another point that was raised was the opportunity to take subjects from both the arts and science disciplines. The participants felt that this was a good way to ensure that you were in the right field as there was always an option to switch majors. All three candidates stated that they would consider enrolling in Taylor's ADP in the future. All of them had kept in touch with their 'buddy' at Taylor's ADP for the first few weeks following the visit and made other friends through this connection.

Face-to-face interviews with the two workshop leaders from Taylor's ADP who had spearheaded the experiential learning workshop were conducted. Both workshop leaders felt

that the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop was a success. Participants were very forthcoming during the question and answer session with most of them wanting to know about scholarships and the different majors available. However, some participants felt that the electives were a waste of time and that students should focus only on their core subjects. Questions raised were mostly of an academic nature. The general feedback that they obtained was that the teaching methods were very unique and interesting, and that students were very friendly. Some participants still keep in touch via friendster.com, an internet link that allows students to stay in touch with each other. The main drawback that they saw was that the event was carried out with form four students instead of form five students who would have been the more ideal target audience.

A telephone interview with the ACS Klang school counsellor, Adaikalasamy, who accompanied the students during the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop, was conducted to determine his views and opinions. He felt that the trip was very innovative as previous colleges that had arranged such field trips only conducted tours of their facilities. There had never been an opportunity for the visiting students to actively participate in the classes going on. The feedback that he obtained from his students was very positive with most of them stating that they had a clearer idea of the American education system following the visit. He felt that students were mostly impressed with the opportunity to attend classes and see for themselves how lectures differed from high school teaching. The only drawback to the programme that he saw was the fact that it was held on a weekday which meant that students would have to miss a day of classes. This necessitated getting approval from the Ministry of Education which involved a lot of bureaucratic formalities for the school.

3.10   Field Notes from Participant Observation
The researcher, as a participant observer, noted that participants were very excited about the visit. Many of them actively participated throughout the day, both in and out of the classrooms. They were attentive during the talks that were given by the programme director and senior Taylor's ADP students but seemed reluctant to ask any questions. However, when broken up into smaller groups, and placed in informal seating arrangements in the hall, they were more comfortable interacting with senior students who rotated among the groups. The buddy system initiated at the very start of the day also ensured that each high school student would have someone specific to turn to should the need arise. Many participants continue to keep in touch with the buddies they linked up with during the event both via the mobile phone and through chat rooms on the internet.

4.   Conclusions
The implications emerging from this research project will relate to the effectiveness of communication channels currently in use by the Taylor's ADP, the theories that explain efficacy of diffusion, and will suggest recommendations for improving marketing of the Taylor's ADP and further research.

Although Taylor's College is spending approximately RM3,674,000 annually on print and electronic media, almost half the students in the control group were unaware that Taylor's College had an American Degree Transfer Programme. Furthermore, not all of those who were aware of Taylor's ADP were able to identify the key characteristics of the programme. There is a definite need to increase this level of awareness. It is safe to conclude that the current mediums of communication, like the mass media, are either not reaching the desired target audience, or do not carry suitable content to get the message across. However, this study did not look at which segments of the print media students were

looking at ie whether they focused on advertisements or news articles in the education pages and it would be interesting to delve deeper into this area.

While almost all the students rated the newspapers as their preferred choice of getting educational information, one must bear in mind that most advertisements placed by Taylor's College are of a corporate nature. Taylor's ADP only advertises three times a year, during the commencement of each semester, and information contained within the advertisement usually pertains to details of the open day. Educational articles featuring Taylor's College also usually focus on the more prominent programmes in the college with only a paragraph or two highlighting Taylor's ADP. Since the print media is rated so highly by the desired target audience, Taylor's ADP should look at disseminating more information through this medium, perhaps by generating a series of newsworthy articles through public relations efforts. Such a move will cost a fraction of the advertising budget and, if such stories are picked up by the media, they are seen to be more credible than advertisements. Interestingly, most of the respondents also indicated that they would turn to friends as the next best source of educational information. Bearing this in mind, Taylor's ADP should look at more face-to-face communication as this will result in a chain reaction where students share what they have learned with their classmates and other school friends. If more experiential learning workshops are conducted, the number of students sharing their experiences with their friends should also increase exponentially.

Ten months following the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop, a resounding number of participants were still able to recollect the key characteristics of the Taylor's ADP. In comparison, less than half the students from the control group, who had only been exposed to the mass media, were able to do so. The results of the questionnaires can be substantiated with that of the interviews conducted with participants of the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop. All of them stated that the experiential approach was an invaluable experience giving them first hand experience of the programme. The added bonus that most of the participants discussed the experience with family and friends only goes to further strengthen the notion that experiential learning leads to more effective diffusion of information and a deeper retention of key messages.

Given that forty-three percent of the respondents surveyed would contact friends at Taylor's ADP and twenty-six percent would contact friends who had attended the Taylor's ADP Experiential Learning Workshop, it is safe to conclude that, in this instance, peer influence and opinion leaders do play a major role in influencing decisions. Hence, it would be prudent to continue with the experiential learning workshops in the hope that the participants would then instil some form of social network in the schools they return to.

Feedback from the interviews show that exposure and experience are important for an innovation like Taylor's ADP as students cannot seem to grasp the concept of a modular education system simply from reading literature. Furthermore, literature handed out during the workshop was deemed 'boring' and 'unattractive' to read. This is the same literature that is sent to prospective students worldwide. If the material is not read, how then is information about the programme going to be disseminated? The college should look at making the literature more user friendly and bear in mind that the American education system, because of its totally different characteristics from the British education system which Malaysian students are used to, will always be viewed with some trepidation. Overcoming this may best be done through actual experience with the programme.

No marketing personnel from the corporate office were involved in this research which would be an eye-opener showing how little diffusion of information is taking place with the current communication strategies that are in use. The cost of the immersion exercise, while considered negligible when compared to current media expenditure, appears prohibitive to management given the small number of participants that can be entertained at any one time.

In Malaysia, American Degree Programmes are widely seen as innovative educational offerings that colleges develop to meet the needs of discerning students. Yet there is little variation in the methods in which private colleges market these programmes to the local community with most of them spending the bulk of their budget on advertising in the mass media. While this may create an awareness of the innovation, and results of this study say otherwise, it does not necessarily lead to adoption of the idea. A more radical approach is needed if the local student population is to be expanded.

Taylor's ADP should take the lead in setting an example of innovative marketing strategy by seriously looking at experiential learning experiences and combining these with traditional media.

Further research in diffusion dynamics as a marketing tool for American education will be of great practical value to scholars and those involved in educational institutes especially given the ministry's directive to increase growth in the intake of students in the private higher education sector (New Straits Times, 2005). Greater exploration conducted with a variety of schools from different parts of the Klang Valley and even nationwide if feasible will provide a better grasp of the ways in which innovative ideas and practices diffuse, and which dissemination approaches are most effective.

References

A C Nielson (2005). *Advertising Expenditure for Private Colleges*

Borzak L (1981). *Field Study: A Source Book for Experiential Learning*, Beverley Hills, Sage Publications.

Barnett E (2003). *The Diffusion of Innovations: Dual Credit Programs in Illinois Community College Systems* http://occrl.ed.uiuc.edu/Projects/dual credit

DeVito A Joseph (2004). *The Interpersonal Communication Book*, Pearson, Allyn and Bacon, 362

Dominick R Joseph (2002). *The Dynamics of Mass Communication*, McGraw-Hill Companies Inc, 13, 517-518

Economic Report (1997-98). Ministry of Finance, Government of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Peat M, Dalziel J & Grant M A (2001).

Enhancing the First Year Student Experience by Facilitating the Development of Peer Networks through a One-Day Workshop Higher Education Research & Development, Vol 20, No. 2

Gant D B & Gant J P (2000). *Using Social Network Analysis to Study Diffusion of IT*, Social Networking Analysis Tutorial.

Gouran D & Hirokawa R (1983). *The Role of Communication in Decision-Making Groups: A Functional Perspective,* Praeger New York, 168-185.

Haggis T, Pouget M (2002). *Trying to be Motivated: perspectives on learning from younger students accessing higher education,* Teaching in Higher Education, Vol 7, No. 3.

Jomo K S (1990). *Growth and Structural Change in the Malaysian Economy*: The Macmillan Press Ltd., London.

Kolb D A, Fry R (1975). *Toward an Applied Theory of Experiential Learning* in Cooper C

(ed.) Theories of Group Process, London: John Wiley.

Kreber C (2001). *Learning Experientially through Case Studies: A Conceptual Analysis*, Taylor & Francis, Teaching in Higher Education (Volume 6 Number 2 April 1, 2001)

McInnis C & James R with McNaught C (1995). *First year on campus: Diversity in the initial experiences of Australian undergraduates* Canberra: AGPS.

Rogers M Everett (1995) *Diffusion of Innovations*, Fourth Edition (The Free Press, New York) 5, 11, 27, 162, 189-190.

The New Straits Times (15 August 2005). "*Hiccups in private higher education*"

The Star, Cover Feature, (12 March 2005*). "A Hard Lesson"*.

The Star (10 July 2005). *"Taylor-made for Success*", Scholarships, 9.

Thibault J W, Kelley H H (1952). *The Social Psychology of Groups*, John Wiley & Sons, New York.

Taylor's College, http://www.taylors.edu.my.

Wilcox, Cameron, Ault, Agee (2003). *Public Relations Strategies and Tactics*, Seventh Edition (Allyn and Bacon, Boston) 178-179

YAB Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Hj Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Malaysia (10 September 2004) *The 2005 Budget Speech.*